

Ringo Project DEIS
Deschutes National Forest, Crescent Ranger District
45-day comment period

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Ringo Project has been completed. The purpose and need of the project is to reduce tree density and surface fuels in order to restore and maintain a resilient, fire-adapted ecosystem that will: protect or enhance quality habitat for key wildlife species including the northern spotted owl, white-headed woodpecker, and big game, allow for safe and effective wildfire response, maintain developed and dispersed recreational opportunities, and contribute to local and regional economies by providing timber, firewood, and other forest products.

The project would also contribute to the local and regional economies by providing timber and other wood fiber products. The proposed action (Alternative B) involves commercial thinning and improvement cutting of approximately 5,264 acres, prescribed burning of approximately 5,322 acres, small diameter thinning on 2,365 acres, 64 acre of meadow enhancement, and construction of 13.6 miles of temporary roads. It would make available to the local economy approximately 21.3 Million Board Feet (MMBF) of timber. Alternative C was developed to respond to the needs of Key Issue #1 by retaining some dense ponderosa pine stands and some decadent lodgepole pine stands in an arrangement of leave areas and large tree clumps. It would reduce the amount of commercial harvest to approximately 4,301 acres, small diameter thinning on 2,523 acres, 64 acre of meadow enhancement, incorporate 946 acres of multi-aged management, and increase the application of prescribed fire to approximately 5,752 acres, producing approximately 20.9 MMBF of timber and constructing 13.6 miles of temporary roads.

Alternative C has been selected by the Responsible Official as the preferred alternative.

Alternatives B and C of the Ringo project include a site-specific project amendment to the Deschutes Land and Resource Management Plan. The amendment addresses Management Area 9 Scenic Views and is consistent with guidance presented in 36 CFR 219.

The DEIS is available on the internet at:

http://data.ecosystem-management.org/nepaweb/project_list.php?forest=110601

If you have already requested a printed copy of the document it should be included with this letter. Otherwise, you may request a copy by contacting the Crescent Ranger District. The comment period ends 45 days after the Notice of Availability is published; it will be published in the Federal Register on March 17, 2017. The public comment period will close on May 1, 2017.

Your participation is encouraged during the public comment period. Comments would be most helpful if they included your name and address; the title of the project; specific comments, along with supporting reasons why you believe they are relevant and should be considered; and a signature or other verification of identity.

Comments can be mailed or hand delivered to the Crescent Ranger District, Ranger District at PO Box 208, (136471 Hwy 97 N.) Crescent, Oregon, 97733, or FAX at (541) 433-3224. The business hours for those submitting hand-delivered comments are 8:00 am to 4:30 pm Monday through Friday, excluding holidays. Oral comments can be provided to Daniel Rife, Crescent District Ranger, only during normal business hours via telephone (541) 433-3200 or in person.

Comments can be filed electronically at: comments-pacificnorthwest-deschutes-crescent@fs.fed.us. Electronic comments must be submitted as part of the e-mail message or as an attachment in plain text (.txt), Microsoft Word (.doc), rich text format (.rtf), or portable document format (.pdf). E-mails

submitted to addresses other than the one listed above, or in formats other than those listed or containing viruses, will be rejected.

Comments received in response to this solicitation, including names and addresses of those who comment, will be considered part of the public record for this project and will be available for public inspection. Comments submitted anonymously will be accepted and considered; however, those who submit anonymous comments will not have standing to appeal the subsequent decision under 36 CFR 218. Additionally, pursuant to 7 CFR 1.27(d), any person may request the agency to withhold a submission from the public record by showing how the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) permits such confidentiality. Request for confidentiality may be granted in only very limited circumstances, such as to protect trade secrets. The Forest Service will inform the requester of the agency's decision regarding the request for confidentiality, and where the request is denied; the agency will return the submission and notify the requester that the comments may be re-submitted with or without name and address within 10 days.

Administrative review

The Ringoproject is subject to the pre-decisional administrative review process pursuant to 36 CFR 218 subparts A and B (aka, the objection process).

During the objection period, only those individuals or organization that submitted specific written comments during a designated opportunity for public participation (such as scoping or the 45-day public comment period) may object (36 CFR 218.5). Objection must meet the requirements of 36 CFR 218.8(d); incorporation of documents by reference is permitted only as provided for at 36 CFR 218.8(b).

The Final EIS and Record of Decision will be posted on the project's website in **June, 2016**. If you wish to receive a printed copy of these documents, you will need to specifically request a printed version.

For further information, contact Joe Bowles at the Deschutes National Forest, Crescent Ranger District, PO Box 208, Crescent, Oregon, 97733 or call at (541) 433-3200.